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The University of
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NEWS RELEASE

May 30, 1997

UM'S OLDEST ALUM MARKS 80TH COMMENCEMENT ANNIVERSARY

MISSOULA --

The University of Montana's student yearbook editors inadvertently listed Beth Fry as graduate of the class that came a year after hers. Eighty years later, the mistake still bothers her.

Mention her college graduation and Fry immediately launches into a complaint about the Sentinel yearbook listing her in the class of 1918 instead of 1917. Fry, who at age 101 is UM's oldest living graduate, was back on campus in full regalia May 17 to help her alma mater mark its 100th Commencement and to celebrate the 80th anniversary of her graduation.

Fry attended UM from 1913 to 1917 and graduated with a bachelor's degree in English and mathematics. She taught algebra and geometry before marrying and raising a family.

UM Alumni Association Director Bill Johnston honored Fry during the ceremony, and Fry challenged graduates of the class of 1997 to return for their 80th reunion in the year 2077.

A lifelong Missoula resident, Fry says the University has always been part of her life. "From the house where I was born on Woodford Street you could look straight across to the University with nothing in the way -- no house, no anything," she remembers. "I knew from the beginning that I was going to the University."

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Contact: Bill Johnston, UM Alumni Association director, (406) 243-5211.

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Chronicle of Higher Education

Fry80th.rl